



January 31, 2002

Bill Caton  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Room TW-B204  
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Application by Verizon for Authorization under Section 271 to Provide Long Distance Service in New Jersey**

Dear Mr. Caton:

On behalf of the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW), I am writing to the FCC in support of Verizon's filing requesting authorization to provide in-region, long-distance services in New Jersey. The NACW is a national non-profit organization composed of over 270 state, county and local commissions nationwide that advocates on behalf of women to facilitate communication and cooperation on issues affecting them and their families and to provide support, technical assistance and expertise to impact public policy. In the state of New Jersey, the NACW has member commissions in Trenton, Port Republic, Hackensack, Mount Holly, Camden, Cape May, East Orange, Newark, Wenonah, Freehold, Toms River, Salem, Somerville, Elizabeth and Belvidere.

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, January 9, 2002, issued a news release endorsing and supporting Verizon's request to offer long-distance market. The NACW believes that Verizon's entry into New Jersey's long distance market will benefit all consumers, especially those in low-income, rural and urban communities. Opening the marketplace to true local and long distance competition will not only bring down costs, but will expand the number of choices consumers will have in selecting long-distance service.

The NACW has previously supported Verizon's applications to offer long-distance service in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania. New York, the first state to approve a 271 application, is an excellent example of where that vision is working. According to

two surveys released in May 2001 by the Telecommunications Research & Action Center (TRAC) New Yorkers will save up to \$700 million on long distance *and* local telephone service. The TRAC study confirms the benefits of competition.

We believe consumers can expect many benefits to follow in New Jersey if Verizon's application is approved. We expect the same to happen in New Jersey if Verizon's application is approved.

AT&T recently INCREASED their basic rates for long-distance service nationwide. Verizon's basic rate plan brings the urban market – and all consumers – significant savings.

Verizon's application is in the "public interest", and we hope the Commission will approve the application without delay.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patricia T. Hendel  
Immediate Past President  
National Association of Commissions for Women